

II. Remarks

Reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is herein respectfully requested. Claims 1-20 have been cancelled. Claims 21-40 are new.

After entering this amendment, claims 21-40 remain pending.

Claim Objections

Claims 3, 5, 6, 11, 18, and 19 were objected to because of informalities. These claims have been cancelled, rendering the objections moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 2-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 2-20 have been cancelled. In light of these cancelled claims, it is believed these rejections should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 2-4, 7-10, and 16-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,431,216 to Legris ("Legris") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,711,550 to Brandt ("Brandt"). Claims 5, 6, and 11-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Legris.

It is first noted that the claims of the present application are new but are similar to those previously submitted. It is first noted that the new independent claims 21, 35, 38, and 40 each recite an insert part which has two parts. The first

part is a relatively hard and dimensionally stable plastic material. The second part is a relatively soft elastic material that forms the dirt seal.

In Brandt, the insert part consists of a single piece plastic molded part, a dirt seal, which is intended to prevent dust, dirt, moisture, and the like from penetrating, being molded onto it as a single piece as an encircling sealing lip. Before the pipeline is inserted, the sealing lip extends obliquely inward in the insertion direction in such a matter that it is somewhat elastically widened by the inserted pipeline and then rests against it in a sealing matter. For the purpose of being able to release the pipeline, the insert part has two elastic latching arms which engage with latching attachments into the base part and into latching openings formed there. Each latching arm has an actuating section which protrudes outward from the base part. While this connecting device works, the dirt seal is still not optimal. In addition, the protruding actuating attachments of the latching arms may be obstructive or may even result in unintentional release.

As stated previously, the present claimed invention includes an insert part having of a first part and a second part. The first part is a relatively hard and dimensionally plastic material and by the dirt seal, consisting of a second relatively soft and elastic material being molded directly onto it as a single piece with a cohesive material joint. This advantageous configuration makes it possible for the dirt seal to be designed specifically in terms of shape and/or material to provide an optimal sealing function. For example, use can be made of the soft and elastic material which is optimally suitable for the seal, and is also possible for favorable shapes, in particular bead like annular cross-sections to be realized, as a result of which a good sealing action is obtained when resting on the circumference of the pipeline.

The examiner admits that Brandt does not disclose the insert part being formed of a relatively hard first part and a relatively soft second part or that the second material is attached directly to the first material to form a single piece with a cohesive material joint therebetween. The examiner simply states that it is well known in the art to seal directly onto an insert part as a one piece construction. However, the examiner has not cited any art what so ever to support this statement. Therefore, any rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Second, the examiner also cited Legris in rejecting the previously supplied claims, however, unlike the present claimed invention, Legris does not show that the insert part is connected to the base part via a snap fit connection. Additionally, Legris discloses only a common seal in the form of an individual annular O ring. Thus, this cannot lead to the inventive feature for a dirt seal being directly attached on to the first material of the inserted part to form a single piece construction. Therefore, none of this prior art documents disclose a combined inserted sealing part integrally formed and consisting of two different plastic materials with a cohesive material joint. As such, since not all the elements are disclosed, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is improper and must be withdrawn.

As to the remaining claims, these claims are all dependent on the above referenced independent claims and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons given above in support of these independent claims. Allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims are patentably distinguishable over the art of record and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments: None